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How to Craft a Great Elevator Pitch (without the buzzwords & jargon!)



Hello Brave One,

Do you feel that way? I hope so. But, if you're anything like me you don't always feel brave. Some days you feel scared outta your freakin' mind. And THERE my friend, is where the magic happens!

In 2011 I left my job in education thinking I'd be home, take care of our sweet baby and simply adore being a stay at home mom. And I did. For a while. But I also ran a daycare out of our home. It was fabulous for our son. Built in playmates. Best friends. Fun, fun fun. And...exhausting. Fast forward 5 years, and add another little sweetie.

Meanwhile, my hard-working, creative, and seriously talented husband was spending all day at a 9-5 that was not his dream job. Nights and weekends he would take on freelance design work. He'd make time for an artistic endeavor here and there.

So there we were.

I'm not gonna lie and say it was dreadful. We weren't depressed. We weren't even broke. But, we both knew in our hearts that this wasn't it. We could do more than get by.

Our journeys are different so I'll stick with sharing mine here. I supported Keith's freelance work and I even tried to find work for him to do in that field...more than I'd like to admit actually.

Over time I felt compelled to do some serious soul-searching.

It wasn't until I realized the values that were at the core of who I was that I began to see more clearly how I could have an impact on the success of our business. I uncovered a need for connectedness and personal growth that had been bursting at the seams and I didn't even know it! I was a coach through and through. I even realized how my past experiences in education had prepared me.

That was the day I saw clearly how our business would change from doing graphic design to building brands.

When we made that switch I didn't even *know* what branding was, really. I *thought* it was a logo. Do you think I was scared? Heck yea! Do you think there were days when I had to force myself to do an elevator pitch without the credentials to back it up? Absolutely. But, in those moments, I had to cling to what I *did* know. I love people. I know you have some amazing ideas. And I want to be the one who cheers you on!

So here we are.

We are Brabender Creative. We coach entrepreneurs and leaders from chaos to clarity in both strategy and design. We help them to clarify their message, focus on effective communication and provide them with the design needed to build a cohesive brand.

Your brand strategist,
April Brabender



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We've all been there. It may have been 10 years ago or it may have been yesterday. If you're braving your second career it was both. You're at a social event, an interview or hiding away in a cafe. And someone comes out of nowhere, smiles and says, "Tell me about yourself" or "How's business going, you guys off the ground yet?"

And you freeze.

You know you should talk about your business. You even want to. Instead you just stand there, nervously. Or you start babbling. You don't have everything as clear as you'd like, there is still so much to learn. So you can't possibly claim you're a _____ who solves _____. That would be absurd!

Or more painful yet, you're silent. You've accomplished 80% of your goals for the month and you're on track for your best month yet. But squeezing your heart's work, your sweat and tears, into 30 seconds of your day just seems unbearable. Instead, you manage to casually change the subject.

And because of this, you miss out. Big time.

You miss out on the conversation that would have transpired. You miss out on a new connection. You miss out on an opportunity to further define and clarify your purpose. But you know what else? The person who asked you that question misses out on getting to see the sparkle in your eye that shows up every time you talk about the thing you are so passionate about. They miss out on the opportunity to learn from you, to be exposed to new ideas. When we keep our mouths shut and our hearts covered up, everyone loses.

How would it feel to just cut it out; once and for all to show up as yourself, heart engaged, ready to be YOU?

Keep reading to uncover my 4 steps that will bring your pitch from phony to fantastic!





1. Make a habit of being present.

It is easy to get swept away by the work we do; the meetings, the projects the deadlines, they all add up. And they can get our minds spinning so fast we struggle to find our bearings. BUT if we want to be ready to genuinely share about ourselves when asked, we need to regularly pause to reflect on our life and our work.

Try this: Set a specific time each day to use as reflection. During that time think about your day. Practice summing up in a phrase or two what you are really thankful for in your business. When can you do this? How much time would you like to spend? Put it on your calendar or set an alarm. Make it a habit!

2. Talk about something new.

If your elevator pitch feels boring to you, it's a pretty good bet it sounds boring to your listener. It's time to freshen up a bit. Don't keep sharing that example from 6 months ago even if it was your best client or biggest accomplishment. You are more than a business owner. You are a whole person.

Try this: On your way to a social gathering, spend a few minutes thinking about the project you are currently working on that excites you the most. (It doesn't always have to be client related). What are you learning? What areas do you want to grow in? What steps are you taking to get there? It just might be the case that the areas of professional and personal development you are growing in are the areas that hook your next lead.

3. Know your audience.

Your elevator pitch doesn't have to be exactly the same EVERY Time. Listen to your audience. Take cues from what they value.

Try this: Imagine two potential clients, both ideal as far as you can tell. One has demonstrated a bend toward logic. The other wears her heart on her sleeve. How might your elevator pitch be given to each as the opportunity presented itself?

4. Relax.

Remember this is a growing process. Its an opportunity for you to get better and better at something that might feel awkward for a short time. BUT it is absolutely worth overcoming. Spend more time observing and enjoying the people you are interacting with than worrying about how you present yourself.

Try this: If you're nervous or aren't sure what to say about yourself, see if you can hear from them first. A polite, "I was going to ask you the same thing" might give you an opportunity to slow down, listen, and present your thoughts in a more meaningful way.

Now that we have the important stuff. Lets quick run through the standard details.

1. Give your title.
2. Describe who you help.
3. Explain what you do to solve a problem or meet a need.
4. Share something that makes you different from the rest in your industry.

If it seems appropriate, **share a story** or ask a question? But don't be pushy. Your first 2-3 sentences should be able to stand alone when necessary. But they should feel natural to expand on when the opportunity arises.

Example: I am a brand strategist. I help business leaders to clarify their message and communicate it in way that engages their audience. And what's really unique about our work, is that my husband and I team up. I'm strategy and he's design. We have the opportunity to bring our clients from conducting research and clarifying strategy to designing an identity that connects them to their audience in meaningful ways.

Person expresses interest. And you assume some of these ideas might be new, so you proceed with personal growth journey to explain more.

Yea, its been quite a journey. Before I met my husband I just thought branding was a logo. And now I realize that it is all about meaningful communication and connecting to your audience. You can have a logo and think you have a brand. But it's not about who you think you are. When it all comes down to it a brand is what other people are saying about you. You know what I mean?

Then, be ready to dive into some great discussions.

Ok, your turn.

I am a (job title) _____.

I help (ideal client) _____.

to (solve problem/meet need) _____.

What's unique about the work I do is _____.

Now, I want you to dig deeper. Let's go back through the tips I mentioned earlier.

1. Make a habit of being present.

In a phrase or two what you are really thankful for in your business?

2. Talk about something new.

What project are you involved in right now that you are super excited about? Or what is something you are learning or an area you'd like to grow in?

3. You can have more than one way to answer the question.

Branding is about who others say you are. So when you share, it needs to be in words they will remember and use to talk about your work in the future. Think about the different ways you could phrase your pitch for 3 unique audiences?

#1 Specific Person/Role/Connection _____

How you'd pitch:

#2 Specific Person/Role/Connection _____

How you'd pitch:

#3 Specific Person/Role/Connection _____

How you'd pitch:

4. Relax.

Here, I want you to give yourself a pep talk. Write down a phrase that you can come back to often. A phrase that speaks truth to you. You are obviously in the role you are in for a reason. What's one line you can tell yourself to remind you of that.

A few examples:

I am enough.

I have value to offer.

I am growing and learning.

I am up for the challenge!

I was made for this!

It's worth the risk!

Now get out there and show 'em what you're made of!